

Please get the facts.

Understand the risks and responsibilities you will be taking on if you choose not to have your child vaccinated.

Before making your decision, talk to your healthcare provider about any concerns you have regarding vaccines.

In addition, feel free to call our Immunization Division toll-free at 1-800-277-4687, or call your local public health department for more information. Also, consult these trustworthy websites:

- Immunization Action Coalition (www.immunize.org and www.vaccineinformation.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/vaccines, or call CDC-INFO Contact Center at 1-800-232-4636)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org/immunization)
- National Network for Immunization Information (www.nnii.org)
- Vaccine Education Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (www.vaccine.chop.edu)



Healthy People. Healthy Communities.

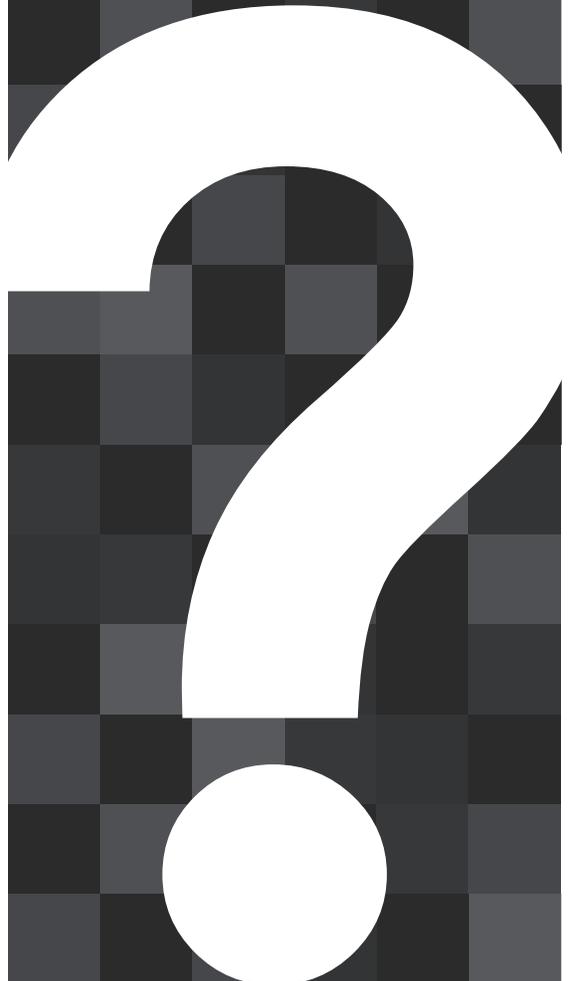
www.scdhec.gov

*We promote and protect the health of the public
and the environment.*

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Brochure adapted from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
and the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)

What if *you don't immunize your child*



Without immunizations...

... your child has a higher risk of catching a vaccine-preventable disease.

Vaccines are so safe and effective that many of us have never seen a child suffering from a serious vaccine-preventable disease.

But just because we don't see a threat, doesn't mean it's not there. The truth is, many people in the United States still get sick every year — and some even die — from a range of vaccine-preventable diseases. Two vaccine-preventable diseases that have increased in the U.S. the past few years are:

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

- Extremely dangerous, especially for babies
- Can cause pneumonia, seizures, brain damage and death
- Recent outbreaks in several states made thousands of babies and children sick. In one state, 10 babies died and more than 800 people were hospitalized.
- Many of these outbreaks began with clusters of unvaccinated children.

Measles

- Can cause pneumonia, brain infection (encephalitis), and death
- So contagious that nearly everyone who has not been vaccinated against it will get sick if they are exposed
- Often brought into the U.S. by travelers who've been to countries where vaccination rates are low or declining (including some frequently visited countries in Western Europe).

... your child can infect others.

Children who are not vaccinated can easily spread vaccine-preventable diseases to others, especially to:

- Babies too young to be fully vaccinated
- Children and adults with certain cancers or weakened immune systems. Many cannot be vaccinated and will become very ill if exposed to someone with a vaccine-preventable disease.

... your child may have to stay home from school or day care.

If a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in your child's school or daycare, public health officials may not allow your child to attend from several days up to several weeks. This is necessary to protect your child and help prevent the spread of the disease to other children.

If your unvaccinated school-aged child is not allowed to attend school during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, this may result in unexcused absences for your child. In addition, your child may not qualify for medical homebound instruction for the missed days.

... your child's protection from vaccine-preventable diseases rests entirely on your shoulders.

If your child becomes ill and needs to see a healthcare provider, make sure you tell medical staff that your child has not received all the vaccines recommended for his or her age.

The healthcare provider treating your child will need to consider the possibility that your child may have a vaccine-preventable disease. Informing them may help them diagnose your child's illness more quickly.

It will also allow those caring for your child to take precautions, such as isolating your child, if that's ever needed to protect your child or others from a vaccine-preventable disease.